

# **Gurumat Siddhant**

## **गुरुमत सिद्धांत**

*A Science of Spirituality Scripture for Dawn of the Golden Era*

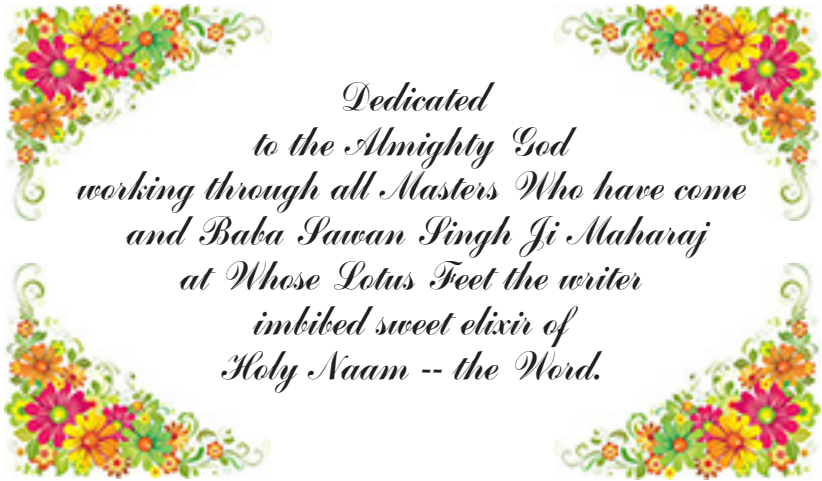


Written by Param Sant Kirpal Singh (R)  
Dedicated to Hazur Baba Sawan Singh (L)

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**Gurumat Siddhant**  
**(Principles of the Path of Perfect Masters-**  
**Sant-Mat or Surat-Shabd Yoga)**

An abridged Translation from the Gurmukhi / Punjabi Original:  
'Gurmat Sidhant'



*Dedicated  
to the Almighty God  
working through all Masters Who have come  
and Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj  
at Whose Lotus Feet the writer  
imbibed sweet elixir of  
Holy Naam -- the Word.*

"Gurmat Sidhant is a book written by me--through my hands I would say, not by me, but by the God-Master within me. I used to write it down and take it to Master to read it to Him so that He may give the final yes."

--Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj



Sant Kirpal Singh Ji giving Satsang in presence of Huzur  
Baba Sawan Singh Ji

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आधी साखी कबीर की, कोट ग्रंथ का सार,  
सत नाम जग झूठ है, सुरत-शब्द सम्हार।

— कबीर साहिब

*A mere half a verse of Kabir contains the  
essence of thousands volumes of scriptures:*

*Naam (Word, inner Light & Sound)  
alone is True; the outer world is false.  
Hence, take recourse to Surat-Shabd yoga.*

— Sant Kabir

## Preface

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**Sants** and other holy men come into this world to impart their spiritual message. Imbued with the bliss of God-realization, they reveal the secret of His Reality to the hearts of seekers. Whoever comes in contact with such Saints is able to get a spark of spiritual consciousness from them.

But how can one completely master the secret of that supreme happiness? The average person listens to a flute and enjoys its melody, but he cannot play it. He can really enjoy it only if he is able to play it. Similarly, the thoughts of Saints are reduced to writing in the sacred books, but one cannot realize the Truth by merely reading these books. It is necessary to engage in the practice of spiritual discipline in order to attain the true and lasting happiness of God-realization.

Spirituality is not attained by merely reading or writing, but by practice. A theory without practice is not of much value. But a practice which is performed even without knowing the theory is not without benefit. By such practice the dormant energy of our soul is awakened. Spiritual energy remains dormant in one who reads and hears about spirituality but does not put it into practice. Therefore, the Saints have always emphasized practice or self-experience.

They have not put emphasis on practice only, but have highly recommended the value of theory also. In order to grasp spiritual theories fully, it is necessary to attend Satsangs (discourses of the Saints). This is the best means of gaining such knowledge, and every seeker is advised to derive benefit from it. Satsang has often been described by Saints as a protecting wall against disruption in meditation.

In Satsang every spiritual subject is dealt with dispassionately and with love. By attending such Satsangs, a seeker attains spiritual knowledge of a high order, even without studying scriptures and other books. So the Saints always advocate self-experience through practice as far more important and beneficial than sheer theoretical knowledge. For, spirituality is essentially an individual proposition. But in the absence of a teacher and without the practice of his teachings, one cannot achieve this high status.

The reading of holy books is, however, not altogether without benefit. But their full benefit will not accrue so long as we do not have self-experience through personal practice. Swami Ji Maharaj says:

यह करनी का भेद है, नहीं बुद्धि विचार ।

बुद्धि छोड़ करनी करो, तो पावो कुछ सार ।।

-- सार बचन संग्रह (24:1:14)

*This is the Secret obtained through self-realization, and not through intellect or discussion. You should, therefore, practise and not depend upon debates. Only then will you be able to realise it.*

Spiritual progress is achieved through individual discipline.

Numerous books have been written on instrumental music such as that of the veena वीन, the sitar सितार, or the flute बाँसुरी, but if one wished to learn how to play one of these instruments, he would have to go to a teacher. Likewise, he cannot attain spiritual knowledge without the help of the Living Master. One may get some knowledge by reading scriptures but one can never gain personal experience or self-knowledge there from.

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**Note:** The term "communion" doesn't mean the Christian rite, in which bread (mostly in form of a host) and wine are distributed as alleged flesh and blood of Christ. Such rituals always are an externalisation, which sometime emerged from the remembrance of something Inner that was lost. Communion originally means "community". So the real communion with Sat Naam or God is a purely inner status, which can be experienced only through the living connection with the Word or the Holy Ghost (Shabd, perceptible as Inner Light and Inner Sound) and that requires no outer rituals.

A person who has never seen fire may be able to know something about its qualities of light and heat, but would not understand what it really is like — how it enters into darkness and how cold is removed by its heat. However, if we light a fire and sit by it, then even without reading about it, we can clearly discern its qualities.

If, to our knowledge of spirituality, we add practice, then such knowledge will adorn the seeker like a garland of flowers. Thus it is that Saints put so much emphasis on practice.

A person who can play a musical instrument needs not read a book about it. What he needs is the instrument and a person who can teach him how best to play upon it. Then if he works at it daily, he will become an expert in course of time. In the same manner, a person may know the theories of spirituality from a Master by attending his Satsangs, but for personal experience it is necessary to practise them. In other words, one should put to practical application what is imparted during Satsang. As one gives more and more time to practice according to instruction, and with love and faith, his spiritual knowledge will increasingly develop.

Spirituality awakens the 'knowing' faculty of the soul. When one has attained such a state, he knows what soul is and how it can meet its Master, the Lord. The name of the practice to attain this consummation is called Yoga.

This type of yoga has been taught by the Saints from time immemorial. It was prevalent even during the prehistoric period, but was then imparted orally by a Master to a disciple. In the beginning, the yoga was practised by breath control, which, however, is both difficult and dangerous. For such practice, one needs much time and also has to abstain from many things. Consequently, this practice was confined to a small number of persons.

The practice for attaining spirituality is also called Surat-Shabd Yoga सुरत-शब्द योग. A description of this yoga can be found in the 'Yoga Sutras योग-सूत्र' of Patanjali, Gorakh Nath, the Buddhist Scriptures, the Devayan Path of Upani-

shads उपनिषदों का देवयान पंथ and Yajur Veda यजुर्वेद. In the Parsee Scriptures — 'Zend-Avesta' — there is also a description of Shabd Yoga.

The Muslim Sufi Saints, amongst them the Chishti, Qalandari & Naqshbandi, too have described it in their books.

Among the Indian Saints, Kabir, Guru Nanak, Dadu, Paltu, etc. have preached this Yoga and described it fully in their writings. Among the Christians, St. John gives a clear description of it (the Word) in the Bible:

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. (Bible John 1:1-3)*

Thus, spirituality or Para Vidya परा-विद्या was preached and practised more or less by the founders and disciples of all religions; but in course of time it declined and became obscure. People forgot the essence and took to rituals, rites, and other outer forms of worship. Eventually, they became quite ignorant about God-consciousness, how to achieve it, or what path to follow towards that realization. They even became oblivious to the higher spiritual regions.

In order to tread the Path of Spirituality, we must first have a longing for God. The following questions naturally arise in the mind of every seeker:

1. What things are necessary for spiritual progress?
2. What is the method of meeting God, and what are the facts and procedures pertaining to this achievement? What are the essentials for traversing the Path?
3. What qualities should one imbibe in order to achieve success?

The teachings of all religions have tried to give answers to the above questions.

### **What is required for Spiritual Attainment?**

According to the teachings of the Saints, there are three essentials for attaining God-Realization:

1. **Satguru** सत्गुरु or the Living Master.

2. **Satsang** सत्संग, which means being in the presence of the Master and listening to his discourses.

3. **Sat Shabd** सत-शब्द, which is also called the Audible Life Stream, or the Sound Current (the Word).

The Adept or Master should be perfect. He should have attained God-realization so that he and God are one. When one has found such a Master, one will eventually attain spiritual peace and the bliss of communion with Sat Naam सत-नाम or God.

So long as one has not met such a Master, how can he hope to come out of this darkness which engulfs him? For, so long as one has not heard his Satsang सत्संग he cannot be coloured in the dye of Spirituality nor will his inner spiritual faculty be awakened in him. And so long as he does not withdraw his attention from the nine doors of the body and meet the Master within at the Tenth, he can make no spiritual progress.

### Method of meeting the Lord and details of practice necessary

Soul is of the essence of the Lord. Kabir also has said that soul is a fragment of Ram राम (God). The soul in the human body is a priceless jewel, and maintenance of life as well as the functioning of the body are dependent upon its energy. The Saints teach that such a priceless jewel should find its fulfillment in blissful union with God.

If a person's attention is fixed at the headquarters of the soul in the body, then gradually his mind becomes cleansed and in course of time he begins to feel that all else is worthless in comparison to his quest for God-realization.

The headquarters of the soul in the body is located at the eye centre. From this point the currents of the soul spread throughout the body, giving it life and providing the necessary energy for its various functions.

The origin of the soul's manifestation is the primeval Sound (Nij Shabd निज-शब्द), on which Sat Shabd सत-शब्द,

Saar Shabd सार-शब्द and Anahad Shabd अनहद-शब्द are dependent. In its upward journey, the soul first contacts the Anahad Shabd and goes up to Sahans-dal-kanwal सहँस-दल-कँवल, the first spiritual region, which is the highest region of the yogis. From here, the soul can go beyond the three gunas गुण (qualities) into the Saar Shabd; thence into the Sat Shabd, and finally can merge into the Original Shabd आदि-शब्द.

Dissolution extends up to the top of Trikuti त्रिकुटी (the home or origin of the three qualities or gunas). Grand dissolution extends up to the region far beyond Trikuti but just below Sat Lok (Sach Khand). The soul which has been able to contact Anahad Shabd, Saar Shabd, and Sat Shabd will (under the guidance of the Master) merge into the Original Shabd. It becomes clear, therefore, that if one practises Surat-Shabd Yoga सुरत-शब्द योग — which is a complete method — one's soul will be taken to its Origin, the highest abode the Lord, which is beyond both dissolution and grand dissolution.

Guru Nanak has stated that one must have recourse to Surat-Shabd practice in order to cross the ocean of life. If this is done in accordance with the instructions of a Master, then even while living in this world he remains free from the evil effects of this world. Such a soul may be compared to a lotus which grows in water and has its roots in water, but its flower remains dry and above the surface of the water. Or it may be likened to a swan which lives in water and yet flies away with perfectly dry wings.

Kabir and other Saints, as well as the ten Sikh Gurus, preached and taught Surat-Shabd Yoga. This is a complete method for attaining God-realization. Guru Nanak has said that our Lord is beyond this universe, and we are on this side of the universe.

The Adept or Master connects the soul of the disciple with Shabd, which enables the soul to cross this universe and rise into the regions above.

The method of Surat-Shabd Yoga is the means for attaining God-realization. It is perfectly natural, and easy. Its



results are obtained quickly if the instructions are followed with love and faith. By this method one does not encounter the difficulties or the dangers which normally confront one who practises Pranayama प्राणायाम. The practice of breath control is not necessary for attaining spirituality, nor need one leave his work, his hearth and home, his caste, etc. This is a divine method, which can be practised by everybody in this world.

### **The three Parts of Surat-Shabd Yoga**

Innumerable Yogis, Incarnations, Saints, and others came into this world and taught the people of the time the methods by which souls could be taken up to the region of their own reach, and they were naturally recognized to be the leaders. Their teachings are preserved in their own writings. So long as the disciples followed their instructions and carried out inner practices they achieved spiritual progress. But in course of time they left the inner practices and took to rituals, rites and ceremonies. Then they gradually lost the spiritual essence and remained satisfied with superficiality.

Rishis ऋषि obtained knowledge by inner practice. This fact is mentioned in the Vedas, Upanishads, and other Hindu Scriptures. Buddha also made mention of the Sonorous Light, that is, the Shabd within Light, and how he attained it. Moses too experienced Light, within himself through inner practice on Mount Horeb (Mount Sinai). Similarly, Mohammed, the great Muslim Prophet, practised for seven long years in a lonely corner of a cave. Thus he saw Light and heard the Kalma or Shabd within himself.

Muslim scriptures make a pertinent reference to it.

Christ also used the method of inner practice and preached the same Truth. Amongst Parsees, Zoroaster preached about Saraosh, having attained it through inner practice.

The followers of Ganesh गणेश practise concentration at the rectal centre, those of Vishnu at the navel centre, of Shiva at the heart centre, and of Shakti शक्ति at the throat centre. Yogis were the followers or worshipers of Jyot Niranjana ज्योतिर्—.

निरंजन, the deity at the Third Eye तीसरा तिल, the centre between the two eyebrows. Yogishwars योगीश्वर worshipped the sun (within), as one will find in the Gayatri Mantra गायत्री-मंत्र of the Vedas वेद. Christ, Saints John, Matthew and Peter have given a description of their teachings in the Bible. Parsees have done the same. Books, both of the East and West, are full of such references of the Saints in their respective countries.

There are indications, clear enough, of the attainment of spirituality in all such books. But now, in the twentieth century, many a pseudo method is being advocated for attaining spiritual progress. The difficulty is that the above-mentioned books were written in their own languages and their translations were made by learned people on the strength of their intellect alone, and not with the realization of actual experience. Such knowledge as is given in the scriptures of various religions and countries can be understood properly only by one who has himself attained this inner knowledge. Otherwise, it remains a secret, for it can be explained only by one whose inner consciousness has been awakened.

We can divide the subject matter of the writings of these great men into two parts. One is objective or external, and is elementary for the beginner in Spirituality; and the other is subjective or internal, and directly concerns the progress of the soul.

The first part consists of rituals, worship, reading of scriptures, pilgrimages, fasts, charity, satsang, singing of hymns, etc. The second part is concerned with spiritual practice, performed inwardly, and directly concerns our consciousness, which is known as soul or the individual soul, by the Vedantists and Sufis, and is a spark of God Himself.

There is a higher consciousness in each one of us, but we can be aware of it only after concentrating our attention at the eye centre. The Saints have called this conscious energy, the surat सुरत or soul. Surat is also another name for the attention, and if it is combined with consciousness it is the soul. It is

within us and is the very life and essence of our whole being. We have to know it (i.e., to know ourselves), and understand it, and thus free ourselves from worldly ties. This is taught by all Saints and all religions.

The Upanishads state: "Know thyself," Christ exhorted us to do the same. The Persian Saints also preached this. And so did Socrates. Guru Nanak has emphasized this very Truth, saying that so long as we do not know ourselves we cannot be free from the deception of Maya माया (Illusion). The Saints gained this realization and taught people to turn their attention towards this goal.

So long as our attention is fixed on the world and worldly objects we are subject to pleasure and pain. But when the attention is directed towards the Lord, we cross the barriers of pleasure and pain. Then Godlike qualities, which had remained latent within us, become manifest. If one is a part of something, that something also must exist. So the soul, which is a part of the Lord, merges in Him as soon as it turns its attention towards the Whole.

Soul is neither mind nor intellect. Mind and intellect are its instruments for functioning in this world. This is where some philosophers made a mistake. Real knowledge is the merging of the soul in the Lord, and real devotion implies the efforts made in that direction. The object of internal practice is to free the soul from its bondage to the body and to the objects of the world.

This practice may be divided into three parts:

1. That which relates to the tongue of the soul (tongue of thought) and is called 'Simran सिमरन', Repetition or Remembrance.

2. That which is to be done with the eye of the soul (the single eye) and is known as 'Dhyan ध्यान' or Contemplation.

3. That which is done with the ear of the soul (the inner ear) and is called 'Bhajan भजन' or listening to the Shabd, or Voice of God.

### **Simran or Repetition includes all types of Recitation**

Some do Simran with the help of the fingers, others with their tongue, and many others with their throat, heart, or even the navel.

Simran is highly beneficial if it is done with the attention of the surat (soul). Therefore, if one has beads in his hands while the tongue moves in his mouth, and the mind wanders, it is not a useful type of Simran.

Kabir Sahib has said in one of his verses:

क्रिया करै अँगुरी गनै, मन धावै चहुँ ओर ।

जेहि फेरे साईं मिलै, सो भया काठ कठोर ॥

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह-2 (सुमिरन का अंग 21, पृ० 95)

*Why are you counting your fingers, with your mind rambling in all four directions? The mind, by 'rotating' which, you would have realized Him, has been reduced to nothing better than a mere block of wood.*

माला तो कर में फिरै, जीभ फिरै मुख माहिं ।

मनूवाँ तो दुइ दिसि फिरै, यह तो सुमिरन नाहिं ॥

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह-2 (सुमिरन का अंग 25, पृ० 95)

*The beads rotate in the hand; the tongue moves in the mouth; the mind runs in all directions. This is not Simran.*

The support of external things for doing Simran, like the counting of beads, is an inferior type of Simran.

Simran by the tongue, by the throat, by the heart, or from the navel center is respectively more efficacious.

Amongst the Muslims also, Simran is done in various ways:

- By the tongue.
- By pressure over the heart.
- By fixing the attention at the eye centre.
- By application of the mind.
- By a secret method to be imparted orally by an Adept to his disciple.

These five methods can be learned individually by one person from another. These types of Simran are beneficial to some extent, when they are done with attention. But the Simran with the aid of beads or by the tongue is ineffective. It may be stated, however, that the Simran done by the tongue

with the attention fixed at the eye center is resorted to by spiritually advanced persons and can be learned from them. But the Saints have chosen the Simran which is done with the tongue of the soul, as best, because the soul gives energy and life to the body, the mind and the senses; and by doing Simran with the soul, the mind concentrates.

Of course, all types of Simran purify the heart to a certain extent and result in some happiness and the longing for the Lord. In fact, one is even able to control and exercise certain supernatural powers by means of Simran. But complete concentration of the soul and the opening of the inner gate to enable one to listen to the Anahad Shabd will not be possible by any means other than that of Simran taught by the Saints.

### **That Simran is best which leads to Inner Concentration**

If Simran is done with the attention of the soul or with the tongue oft thought then the heart of that individual becomes attuned to the Lord. All worldly thoughts vanish from the mind of the person who practises in this way, and are replaced by the thought of the Lord. Then one feels His presence everywhere.

Kabir Sahib says:

तू तू करता तू भया, मुझ में रही न हूँ।

वारी तेरे नाम पर, जित देखूँ तित तूँ॥

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह-2 (सुमिरन का अंग 37, पृ० 96)

*By repeating 'Thou', 'Thou', I became Thee.*

*For, when the I-ness vanished from me, I saw nothing but Thee.*

A person who has naught but the remembrance of God in his mind is truly great.

We run after the objects of this world through our senses. And if we were to analyse it carefully, we would know that there are three main avenues through which we run out:

**1. The tongue** – through speech.

**2. The eyes** – through vision. We give and receive impressions through the eyes.

**3. The ears** – through hearing.

In this manner the impressions of the world enter our mind. In order to keep these impressions away, one should have the seal of Simran on his tongue. Then the same organ will produce impressions of the remembrance of the Lord on our subconscious mind. By continuous Simran, our previous impressions will be erased. If any new thoughts arise, they will be concerning the Lord. This will eventually result in concentration of the mind and soul. This method is natural and easy, and every person, in any walk of life, can adopt it.

In order to do the inner Simran, it is not necessary to resort to other methods like breath control, because these methods are difficult to perform and are artificial in nature. Above all, they involve risk in being performed by a householder or a physically weak person.

### **What is *Simran* and how should it be done?**

To remember the Lord with every breath of our life is known as Simran. Simran is practised with the ultimate aim of attaining communion with Him. Simran should be done in accordance with the instructions of a Master whose own soul has merged in God. Such Simran will result in the greatest good, because it makes use of thought transference (Master to disciple), which removes all obstacles that confront us in our transport to the upper regions. Thus the soul receives personal and constant guidance on the difficult path leading to the upper spiritual regions.

Simran should be done by sitting in a comfortable posture, by concentrating the attention at the centre between the two eyebrows, and by lovingly and devotedly repeating the Holy Names with the tongue of the soul. By doing this, the wavering mind becomes steady and one is able to achieve concentration.

Simran, of course, can be done while waiting, walking, or in other conditions. Nor is it necessary to neglect worldly duties for this purpose. On the contrary, one should earn

one's own living. One should keep one's mind and body unperturbed, in order to practise Simran as instructed by the Master. The hearing and the seeing power of the soul should also be developed. This kind of Simran, even for a moment, is far more efficacious than Simran of various other types, even if done for ages.

### **Object of *Simran***

The object of Simran is to have communion with God. The soul alone can realize Him. It is not possible for the mind, the senses or the intellect to know God. But so long as the soul is active in all parts of the body and in the objects outside, it cannot know the Lord.

By doing Simran according to the Master's instructions, we withdraw our attention from the worldly objects, thus withdrawing mind and soul currents from every pore of the body, bringing them to the eye centre, and concentrating them there. In this manner the mind and the soul are concentrated at the headquarters of the mind and the soul in the body, and the body becomes dead to the world. When this happens, then a person has conquered death while living.

When the practice is properly done and one's inner eye opens, then that individual becomes aware of eternal consciousness. Simran is a ladder which takes us to the higher regions where we may have communion with the Lord. Whoever finds pleasure in doing Simran as instructed by the Master, will one day assume or merge into the form of God Himself. It is for this reason that all Saints have preached and taught the proper method of doing Simran within.

### ***Dhyan* or Contemplation**

We automatically think of the form whose Simran we may be doing, and it is not possible to separate one from the other. Whenever we close our eyes and start thinking, we see immediately the images of our children, of our domestic life, of our work, of our country, of the seas and oceans, or of other

objects of the world about which we may be thinking. When the spiritual practice is done properly, one should be able to behold the Lord with the eye of the soul (single eye) and listen to His voice with the ear of the soul (inner ear).

Soul has two faculties:

1. **Surat** सुरत (hearing) and
2. **Nirat** निरत (seeing)

The Surat functions in listening within or in doing the Simran. The function of Nirat is that of seeing within or in doing contemplation.

The next step toward attaining communion with God is Dhyan or Contemplation. This is the result of successful Simran, because this can be achieved only if the Simran has been successful.

By Simran the soul currents are concentrated at the eye centre, which is also known as the Tenth Lane, the Tenth Gate or the Third Eye. By means of Contemplation, the soul rises to the regions above. The soul is really blind until the inner vision is developed, which enables it to witness spiritual sights within.

In our spiritual journey upwards, shows Nirat (seeing power) the way, and Surat (hearing power) announces the place. By this method the soul is able to merge itself in Shabd (which will take it to its Original Home). Contemplation or Dhyan is natural to every human being, and apparently impossible things are achieved by means of Contemplation.

## Methods of Contemplation

Various methods of Contemplation are prevalent. Amongst the Hindus, the practice is performed by fixing the eyes on the tip of the nose. Others contemplate on status or pictures of Saints. Still others fix their gaze on letters or even on different colours. Amongst the Muslims also there are a number of methods for Contemplation, but they are generally related to the physical vision.



All these practices should be performed under the guidance of a Master or an Adept. We have not seen the Lord, and He can be seen only by a highly evolved soul. Therefore, the best course is to dwell upon the form of the Master, who is Himself in communion with the Lord. When we succeed in this method of Contemplation, the Radiant Form of the Master within becomes our guide in the upper regions and constantly remains with us.

### **Upon whom shall we contemplate?**

Our aim in life is to meet the Lord. In order to meet Him, we should repeat His Name and contemplate upon Him. But since we have not seen Him, how can we do so? God is beyond the reach of our mind and our physical eyes, so on whose form should we contemplate?

God manifests Himself through Shabd, which is a language without words. It can be heard only by one with a pure mind. But a great soul who has merged in the Lord through Shabd, is virtually the Lord in human form, as he and the Lord are one.

Of such a soul one can truly say:

*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. (Bible, St John 1:14)*

And that soul, in the human form, is worthy of our contemplation because not only has he all the five tattwas rRo (elements) complete in him but he has become one with the Lord.

Man is the epitome of all creation, and a true Master is the greatest of all men. All other species, such as birds, trees, insects and beasts are below the status of men, and if we were to contemplate on them, we definitely would be pulled down. It is for this reason that the Saints have advocated contemplation on the form of a Master. His real form is the Light of Truth. Even his physical body is like a bright mirror in which the Lord is reflected.

## God Himself is imperceptible

If anyone wishes to perceive Him, he can do so only through His Saints, because they are highly evolved souls who have merged in Him.

Guru Arjan Dev goes so far as to say:

सफल मूरति परसउ संतन की इहै धिआना धरना ॥

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (देवगंधारी म० 5, पृ० 531)

*Those who worship and serve a Master are the ones dear to my Lord.*

To worship the Master is true service of the Lord because, by His Grace, the Master takes human beings beyond the bondage of the phenomenal world.

The aim of Contemplation is to know God. This is achieved by listening to God in action, referred to as Naam or Shabd. We cannot listen to Shabd (Sound Current or Word), or be connected with Naam except through the help and guidance of the Living Master, who is merged in the Lord and is therefore the Lord Incarnate. We should therefore contemplate on the form of the Master, as we can see him. And so long as we do not see the Radiant Form of the Master within ourselves by means of Simran, we must necessarily contemplate on the physical Form of the Master. The Radiant Form of the Master guides us in the upper regions, because that form is the Master Soul whose Light is refulgent.

So long as the Master is in his physical body, he never calls himself Master. He also does not say that we should contemplate on his form.

A mirror has a smooth surface. When the currents of our mind strike on that surface, we see the reflection of our own face. If we are smiling when we look at it, we see a smiling countenance. If we look at it with a crying face, we see a crying resemblance. The mirror does not invite us to look at it. Similarly, the Master does not need our contemplation. Contemplation is for our own benefit.

In the method of Surat-Shabd Yoga सुरत-शब्द योग, we have three stages of Contemplation:

1. On the physical form of the Master स्थूल ध्यान.

2. On a light, like the light of a candle, which appears within when the 'Nirat निरत, faculty of the soul is awakened. This is subtle contemplation सूक्ष्म ध्यान in the astral sphere.

3. On the Radiant Form of the Master गुरु-स्वरूप ध्यान, which is above eye center, and which takes us beyond the Astral and the Causal Planes, to regions above, the finally to our Goal, which is union with God. Just as we need a staircase to reach the roof of a house, similarly we cannot rise to these regions without contemplating on the form of the Master.

These benefits can be derived by contemplating on the physical form of the Master. Contemplation on pictures or photographs of Saints does not yield results.

Tulsi Sahib says:

कल्प वृक्ष के चित्र लख, कीनै विनय हज़ार ।

बित न पावें ताहि सिउ, तुलसी करे विचार ।।

*You may make a thousand pictures of a Kalpataru (wish-granting tree), but if you ask hundreds of favours from it, you cannot hope to receive even one.*

By gazing at paper (the picture or photograph on paper), you feel the love for that particular paper. It is a mere physical object and can exercise no spiritual pull.

When the Radiant Form of the Master is seen within, then the disciple should fix his gaze on that Form and merge himself into it, so much so that the disciple should feel no difference between himself and the form.

Amir Khusro says:

मन तू शुदम तू मन शुदी, मन तन शुदम तू जां शुदी,

ता कस नगोयद बअद अज़ीं मन दीगरम तू दीगरी ।

-- अमीर खुसरो (पृ० 531)

*I am you and you are me. I am the body and you are its life, so that nobody can now say whether I am you or you are me.*

When the practice is complete, no difference remains between the devotee and the object of his devotion. The worshipper and the object of worship become one.

Guru Amar Das also says:

नानक आपु छोडि गुर माहि समावै ॥

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी की वार म० 3, पृ० 509)

*Withdraw yourself within, because then you will merge into the Master.*

The Master is God-Man, that is, God plus man. And if the disciple is a Gurumukh (mouthpiece of the Guru), that is, Guru-man, then nothing remains in him but God.

### **At which Centre should one contemplate on the Form of the Master and in what manner?**

In Satsang or whenever one has an opportunity to see the Master, one should, like a small child, gaze at him without blinking the eyes. One should also fix his attention on the entire face of the Master. At such time no extraneous thought should be allowed to enter the mind. By this method of Contemplation, we imbibe within ourselves the active influence of our Master's way of life. This constitutes the first step in our progress towards spirituality.

The physical form of the Master is all pure, so an impure mind cannot imbibe His purity, much less behold Him within. In order to practise Contemplation (Dhyan Yoga ध्यान-योग), it is necessary to have a pure mind. The Master's beautiful form, full of purity and love, can be discerned only by pure and loving eyes. One should, therefore, look at him with a pure mind and a loving heart, as the Muslims look at the moon on the Id eve. The Radiant Form of the Master cannot be perceived by every eye. This can be visualized only by rare, noble souls.

### **Benefits of Contemplation on the Form of the Master**

There are many advantages of such Contemplation. The inner currents emanating from the Master, as also his good qualities, enter the disciple's mind.

In his Yoga Sutras, Patanjali says:

वीतरागविषयं वा चितम् । यदाभिमतध्यानाद्वा ॥

-- पातंजल योगसूत्र (1:37-39)

*If you contemplate on the form of one who has no attachments, then you attain concentration of mind.*

The Master remembers God at all times and has the power to rise at will to the upper regions. By contemplating on such a Form, we also increase our power to remember God and are able to travel upward on our spiritual journey. All those who have achieved spiritual success, have done so by contemplating on the Form of their Master.

### ***Dhun or Bhajan – Listening to the Sound Current***

In the science of Spirituality there are different theories regarding Simran सिमरन (Repetition or Remembrance) and Dhyān ध्यान (Contemplation). Emphasis is laid on the Simran which is imparted to the disciple by a Master. Contemplation on the form of the Master is conducive to the greatest good.

Successful Simran leads to Dhyān and successful Dhyān to Bhajan भजन or listening to Shabd शब्द (the Sound Current). This stage is also termed Bhajan in the language of the Saints. It is heard by the soul. It is also called Shabd Yoga शब्द योग or the method of Surat-Shabd Yoga सुरत-शब्द योग.

People are attracted by two things, namely, form and sound. Sound, even on the physical plane, has a greater power of attraction. A deer places its head on the drum, because it finds the melody irresistible. This melody has an even greater fascination for the human mind. Men begin to sway in rhythm when they listen to music.

Every religion has laid emphasis on music or 'kirtan कीर्तन' (singing of hymns with the accompaniment of instruments). Kirtan was prevalent in India during the Vedic period. Even today, the Hindus sing hymns in praise of God to the accompaniment of bells, the conch, etc. . The Sikhs also lay great emphasis on this. Christians ring bells and sing sweet and melodious hymns. The Buddhists have their temple bells. The Sufis also are greatly attached to music.

Bhai Gur Das says:

जौ पाए नाद बाद सुनि मृग आन ज्ञान राचै,  
प्राण सुख हवै सबद बेधी न कहावई ।।

-- भाई गुरदास (कवित सतैये, 412)

*So long as your mind is drawn by outer sounds, the soul cannot be attracted by the real sound within. By listening to the outer sounds, a man is waylaid in the quagmire of ignorance, in the same way as a deer is waylaid by the sound of the drum.*

Therefore, the Sikh scriptures emphatically declare that,  
राग नाद छोडि हरि सेवीऐ ता दरगह पाईऐ मानु ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल वार म० 4, पृ० 849)

*So long as a man does not withdraw his attention from the outer music, he cannot find rest in the Court of the Lord.*

The real Sound within is produced without the aid of hands or feet, and is different from the seven notes on the musical scale. In fact, it lies beyond these notes.

Because of the paucity of highly spiritualized men, and because of the lack of adherence of their teachings, people generally remain satisfied with the outer sounds. The outside music doubtless helps in achieving concentration to a certain extent. But it is helpless in taking one to the finer regions within. The result is that one still remains within the four walls of the three gunas गुण (qualities) and thus misses the real aim of life. It is only the inner music that can take one beyond the sphere of the three gunas and grant true bliss. The Scriptures tell us that the Sound Current is constantly resounding within all human beings. That is why it has been called the unceasing or 'Akhand Kirtan अखण्ड कीर्तन' (singing of hymns within, which really means listening to the Shabd or Sound Current within). It is for this reason that Saints do not approve of the outer or physical singing of hymns or playing of musical instruments.

Muslim Fakirs have also emphasized listening to the Sound within, and have said,

हैफ़ दर बंदे-जिस्मे-दरमानी, नश्नवी सौते-पाके-रहमानी ।

-- दीवाने-निराज़ बरेलवी (पृ० 90)

*It is unfortunate that you are fettered by the pleasures of the senses and do not listen to the pure Voice of the Merciful Lord.*

Listening to and merging in the Sound of Naam or Shabd is the only means of attaining Godhood, and this Sound is constantly reverberating within the forehead. It can be heard only through the company of Saints and by following their instructions. That alone can give us peace of mind and eternal happiness. The Key to the treasure of Naam with all its attendant benefits has been placed in the hands of the Saints. Whoever abides by their instructions and accepts their guidance as the Way of Truth, discovers this Treasure.

Although the Sound reverberates in every human being, it cannot be heard by everyone. In order to be able to hear it, one has first to be initiated by a Master and then has to practise listening within, according to the Master's instructions. The real Sound within is the monopoly of Gurumukhs गुरुमुख (those who follow the Guru's instructions) alone, and it bestows many benefits on them.

While the outer music soothes the mind, it dulls the soul. In other words, it awakens the mind but puts the soul to sleep. But by listening to the Inner Sound, the soul, which was in deep slumber for many ages, is awakened and the mind is put to sleep. There is no better method of subduing the mind than by listening to the Sound. It is only then that it becomes calm and tranquil.

By far the best and the highest form of spiritual practice is to do Simran सिमरन with the tongue of the soul, to contemplate on the form of the Master with the eye of the soul (single eye), and to listen to the Sound Current with the ear of the soul (inner ear). This is the easiest, quickest and surest way of achieving permanent results. A child, a young or an old person can do it without any difficulty.

These three steps of the practice can be accomplished by withdrawing one's attention from the nine outlets of the body and fixing it in the Tenth Door or Daswan Dwar दसवाँ द्वार the eye centre, which is the headquarters of the soul in the body.

The yogis have described Ashtanga Yoga अष्टांग-योग (the yoga of eight parts) as a prelude to spiritual practice. The eight parts consist of Neti नेति, Dhauti धौती, Basti बस्ती, Nauli नौली, etc. and then Poorak पूरक, Kumbhak कुम्भक and Rechak र्चक (inhaling, holding the breath, and slowly exhaling). They concentrate thereafter at the rectal centre and achieve certain supernatural powers. Then they fix their attention at the generative centre, achieving still greater powers; then at the heart center and after that at the throat center. Finally they reach their goal, viz., the Kanj Kamal कंज-कैवल, or the centre between the two eyebrows. There they catch hold of the Anahad Shabd अनहद शब्द and reach the first spiritual region, Sahans-dal-kamal or Kanwal सहँस-दल-कैवल. The five lower centres derive their power from the sixth centre, which is situated in the forehead.

In the waking state, the human body is controlled by the energy at the eye centre, so the Saints have not recommended the above methods, because these methods are difficult as well as dangerous to practise. Moreover, they bring the attention down from its already higher headquarters. The Saints, therefore, teach us to rise from the eye centre upward rather than first drag the attention down to the lower centres.

Shams-i-Tabriz has termed these five lower centres or chakras the tomb of the body. He says:

आखिर चिह्न बाशद गर शबे, अज्ज जां बरआरी या रवे,  
बेरुं जही अज्ज गोरे—तन आंदर रवी दर साख्ते।

-- कुलियाते-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 871)

*How wonderful it would be if at nightfall we were to withdraw our life from the tomb of the body and take it upwards!*

The Saints therefore knowingly forbid us from practising at the lower centres, for that would be like descending first to the ground floor from the second or higher floor in order to reach an upper story. The method taught by the Saints enables us to commence our journey from the sixth centres, which is also known as Teesra Til तीसरा तिल or the Third Eye. And it is for this reason that they lay emphasis on controlling the



three main senses which drag our attention down, namely, the tongue, the eyes, and the ears.

The result of spiritual practice is that the soul is concentrated at the centre between the two eyes and catches the Anahad Shabd अनहद शब्द. In other words, it unites the currents emanating from the two points of the eyes and takes the attention upwards to the stars, the sun and the moon. Then, by listening to the Sound of the Bell and the Conch, the soul reaches Sahans-dal-kanwal. It then rises up to Trikuti त्रिकुटी, Daswan Dwar दसवाँ द्वार and Bhanwar Gupha भँवर-गुफा, enjoying the various sights and lights of these regions. From here it goes to Sat Lok सत-लोक (Sach Khand सच-खण्ड) and thence to Alakh अलख, Agam अगम and finally to Anami अनामी, which is the highest region of spirituality.

### ***Amrit Vela – Ambrosial Hours – When to meditate***

Any time is good for devotion to the Lord, and one should seize every opportunity that comes his way for this purpose. But the early morning time, which is known as the time of Elixir, is particularly favorable.

We feel tired after the day's work, but sleep refreshes us by the time it is early morning. The best time is from three o'clock in the morning onwards, when concentration is easily achieved. Guru Nanak has also mentioned the time of Elixir as the best time for contacting the True Naam by contemplating on Him and repeating His Name.

Another reason for this being the best time is that during the time of sleep the soul (which is the attention or consciousness) comes down to concentrate at the throat or the navel centre, and as we wake up in the morning it begins to scatter throughout the body. So, if immediately on getting up, we endeavour to withdraw our attention to the eye centre, it can come up easily, as it has not yet established itself in all the pores of the body.

Even otherwise, the morning time is useful for spiritual practice because before the rising of the sun the mind's cur-

rents are usually concentrated. And any seed of Naam sown at this time cannot but bear fruit. This time of Elixir, which people in their ignorance treat as time for sleep, is lost in slumber by most people. But at this time, the devotees of the Lord are awake. Not only this, but the daytime, which is considered by people of the world as the time for work, is regarded by devotees of the Lord as night.

At the time of Elixir, currents of Grace and Benevolence flow from the Lord, and only those, who are awake and sit in deep devotion to him, receive this great boon. Such persons conquer death while still alive.

फरीदा पिछल राति न जागिओहि जीवदड़ो मुइओहि ।।

-- आदि ग्रंथ (सलोक सेख फरीद, पृ० 1383)

*The head which does not bow in Devotion to its Master in the early hours of the morning, is useless.*

The Gurumukhs, or devotees of the Lord, are awake in the early morning hours and enjoy the Bliss of their Lord's Name. To sleep during this time is nothing short of a sin.

We spend hundreds of nights in pursuit of sensual gratification or in the acquisition of wealth. Have we ever spent a single night in remembrance of our Lord? To keep awake at night or to sleep less is natural with all Saints, because whatever they have gained was realized by them during the night.

O man, you should also keep awake in His remembrance at night and put yourself in the practice of Simran सिमरन, Dhyan ध्यान and Bhajan भजन.

By such practical not only does the soul become fresh but also the mind and the body gain freshness. No fatigue of any kind remains. Farid says:

फरीदा राति कथूरी वंडीऐ सुतिआ मिलै न भाउ ।।

जिन्ह नैण नींद्रावले तिन्ह मिलणु कुआउ ।।

-- आदि ग्रंथ (सलोक सेख फरीद, पृ० 1382)

*Fareed, musk is released at night. Those who are sleeping do not receive their share. Those whose eyes are heavy with sleep, how can they receive it?*

At night such beautiful solitude envelopes us that it can be compared to a river containing innumerable precious jewels of spirituality. Whoever is awake in devotion at the time becomes wealthy, for the wealth of the Sound Current can be received by the devotee almost gratuitously.

Hafiz has also said that the early morning devotion and sighs over separation from Him constitute the key to the Treasure of Naam.

दुआए-सुबहो-शामे-तू कलीदे-गंजे-मक्सूद अस्त,  
ब-ई राहो-रविश मीरौ किह् बा दिलदार पैवंदी ।

-- दीवाने-हाफिज़ (पृ० 407)

*The key to the Treasure of God lies in meditation during the early morning hours and pining for the Lord the whole night. In other words, you should tread this Path so that you may meet your Beloved.*

### Asana – Posture

In what posture should one sit to perform the spiritual practice mentioned in this treatise? Many postures are mentioned in books written on yoga, the eighty-four of them are well known. Each of these postures is performed in a different manner, either by standing on the feet, by lying on the ground, by sitting, or by standing on the head. Each posture has its own merit, although some are exceedingly difficult to perform. However, the Saints do not consider these difficult postures necessary for spiritual uplift. They have recommended that posture which is most convenient and easy for everyone to practise.

For it can be performed by a householder, a child, a young or an old person, with equal ease.

The first prerequisite for spiritual practice is alertness. For this purpose one may take a bath or have a wash, then sit cross-legged on the floor or on a wooden stool, with the back straight but not stiff. One should not take the support of anything. The main object is that the devotee should sit in a comfortable posture, where he can sit for some hours. At the same time, he should make sure that he does not fall asleep.

The body should be relaxed. Then the soul currents should be brought up to the eye centre. This is the only way in which we can prevent desires from arising in our mind. While sitting in this position, one should start his Simran.

By so doing, the soul currents which are spread throughout the body, begin to withdraw and concentrate at the eye centre, with the result that the astral consciousness is awakened. Then one should contemplate, and as soon as one is able to behold the Radiant Form, one's attention should be fixed in it to such an extent that one actually merges in it. Then will be heard the Sound Current which will lift up the soul automatically.

Guru Nanak says:

धिआन रूपि होइ आसणु पावै ॥ सचि नामि ताड़ी चितु लावै ॥

-- आदि ग्रंथ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 877)

*While sitting in a particular posture, with our attention fixed within, we shall automatically contact the True Naam.*

### **Jeete-Jee Marna – Dying while Living**

By means of Simran – the first step in Surat-Shabd Yoga – the entire energy of the body (the soul currents) withdraws itself to the headquarters of the soul in the body, which is the eye centre; and then ascends upwards by means of the Sound Current that reverberates there.

When the soul is separated from the body, that state is called "Dying while Living."

Those who practise in accordance with the instructions of a Master, "die" every day. They are able to leave the body and go into the Astral Region (or regions above, depending upon the extent of their progress), and again return to the body at will.

One who practises Surat-Shabd Yoga leaves his body in the same manner during his lifetime as one does at the time of one's death. The only difference is that the "Silver Cord" of life with the body is not broken. Therefore, a successful devotee has at his command the power to go to the Astral, the Causal, and even higher regions, and to come back at will.

The advantage of such practice is that a person is able to cross the Gate of Death without any inconvenience and without fear. In other words, he conquers death. The Saints have actual experience of this state, and whoever wishes can also do so. It is mentioned throughout the Scriptures in symbols, but these symbols should not be regarded as empty words.

All the Saints eulogize the uniqueness of this condition. Dadu says:

दादू पहिली मरि रहै, पीछे तौ सब कोइ ॥

-- दादू दयाल की बानी, भाग-1 (पृ० 191)

*Oh Dadu! One should die now. Everybody dies at the end of life's span.*

It is also mentioned in the Koran that one should die before his death. This does not mean that one should commit suicide. (In fact, suicide is considered to be the greatest of sins). At the time of death everybody is helpless, and the soul is forced to leave the body (the result of which is intense agony).

Therefore, Guru Nanak and all the Saints say:

मुइआ जितु घिर जाईऐ तितु जीविदआ मरु मारि ॥

-- आदि ग्रंथ (सिरी राग म० 1, पृ० 21)

*To reach your True Home after you die, you must conquer death while you are still alive.*

नानक जीवितआ मरि रहीऐ ऐसा जोगु कमाईऐ ॥

-- आदि ग्रंथ (सूही म० 1, पृ० 730)

*O Nanak, remain dead while yet alive; practice such a Yoga.*

This "Dying while Living" does not mean that one should be cremated or buried. The whole world is afraid of death, and everyone wishes to live. But the one who has practised concentration looks at life and death with the same frame of mind and achieves Life Everlasting by dying while living.

God has bestowed three different bodies on everyone – the physical, the astral and the causal – so that one may withdraw from the physical to the astral, from the astral to the causal, and from the causal to higher spiritual planes.

We should not be afraid of withdrawing from the physical body, because that is the ultimate end of all life in this world.

The Saints have described the method of going beyond the "Gate of Death". By this method the disciple actually goes up and then again comes back into the same body (during the lifetime of that body). Such a person enjoys the scenes in the higher planes and remembers them.

Plutarch has said,

*At the moment of death the soul experiences the same impressions and passes through the same processes as experienced by those who are initiated into the Great Mysteries.*

Our soul is not of this world and its home lies beyond. But so long as one is not able to die while living, one does not end the cycle of births and deaths. One can be free from this predicament through the Grace of a Master, by completely surrendering oneself to Him, and thus banishing the ego and becoming a Gurumukh. Then alone does one know oneself. By this practice of Surat-Shabd Yoga one attains God-realization during one's lifetime and is also honoured in the Court of the Lord.

### Seva – Selfless Service

The aforementioned achievement is possible only through the Grace of a Master. And that Grace is bestowed on us in proportion to the service we render. There are various kinds of service, such as obedience, respect, charity, worship, and endeavour to please the Master and to abide by his instructions.

जिनि सेविआ तिनि पाइआ मानु ॥

- आदि ग्रंथ (जप जी, पृ० 2)

*Whoever renders service one day achieves obedience, respect and honour from the whole world.*

Service is the highest of all practices. If one renders no service, he can never expect to receive any reward. Those who do not render service are worthless.

Service is of four kinds: That which is rendered

- with the body and wealth,
- with mind,

- with soul
- to the Living Master

The highest type of service which anyone can render is service to the Lord, or to His manifestation in the human form, namely an Adept or the Master.

The next best service is that which is rendered to the world and its people. Next the service to the Soul.

One should render all types of service to the dear ones of the Lord, because no wealth, no sovereignty and no high state in life can equal the reward of this service. But service is really rewarding if it is done with the mind and the soul. Through service with the body and the mind, the heart of the devotee is attached to that of the Master. And the Master or the Guru is the Treasurer of God's wealth. Therefore, we shall certainly attain God-realization (Communion with God), if we serve our Master.

One should therefore serve such a noble soul who is a Master, and whose service will always be rewarding. When we meet such an exalted person, who is the manifestation of God on earth, we should hasten to worship Him. If one is so fortunate as to be near a Master, one should obey the words and instructions of the Master implicitly, without bringing into play his own mind. Whichever way the mind leans, the body will turn that way also. We should cease to be arrogant but should constantly think of God, and we should surrender our ego into the hands of our Master.

Whatever we wish to think, we should think on behalf of the Master, discarding self and its viewpoint. Then, we shall always be successful in our mission.

There is another kind of service which is higher and better than the service of body, mind and wealth. This is known as service with the soul and consists of withdrawing the soul current from every pore of the body and attaching it to Naam. This is accomplished through devotion to the Master and by banishing the ego. Service to our family, to our community, and even to our country is praiseworthy. But this kind of ser-

vice attaches us to the world and worldly objects. It is only the service to the Master that is noble and pure, and frees us from all attachments. He is, in fact, the Fountain of the love of God in human form. So by serving Him alone, we can be freed from all attachment.

If we love the Lord, we also love His creatures. Only in this way is the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man firmly established. By serving the Master, we achieve fulfillment of all the four values, namely, Dharma धर्म (Mode of Life), Arth अर्थ (Wealth), Kaam काम (Desires) and Moksha मोक्ष (Salvation). Thus are satiated all worldly desires and the value of Forgiveness, Non-violence, Mercy, Truthfulness, Austerity and Cleanliness are inculcated and we achieve Salvation. The Guru or the Master is the Fountain-head of the Knowledge of God, and He is more valuable than our physical body, our mind and all our wealth. Therefore, we should sacrifice all these things to win His Grace.

Service to the Master consists in surrendering oneself at his Lotus Feet and in being devoted to Him and the Name of the Lord. The Master is actually Shabd incarnated or the Living Master in the human form. Therefore, service to Him is to merge oneself in Shabd, which is the highest service of all. It is also the highest of all austerities, and by it the Lord Himself is contacted and we gain freedom from all suffering.

Such, however, can be our lot only if our Prarabdh Karma प्रारब्ध कर्म (Fate) justifies it.

Service to the Guru has been in vogue in all the four yugas युग (ages) and is the one most acceptable to God. There are really only two worthwhile kinds of service: One is the service rendered to Saints, and the other (through them) rendered to God. The Saint is the bestower of God's Name, and God is the bestower of Salvation.

### **Satsang – Companionship of Truth**

In order to perform our practice successfully, it is necessary to have Satsang सत्संग. It is a natural tendency of the mind



to be influenced by the company it keeps. By association with the people of the world, the worldly tendencies predominate; and by keeping the company of spiritually-inclined persons one becomes spiritually orientated.

It is therefore clear that if one desires to advance on the path of Spirituality, he must necessarily keep the company of those who are on that path. For association with them will enable him to imbibe their good tendencies.

One who has manifested the Truth within himself is the incarnation of Truth, and his life currents have a powerful influence on his environment. As a consequence, people coming in contact with him will also be disposed towards Spirituality. He works for us as a true Guru and a Guide because he has himself achieved the Goal. Such a one teaches us the method of attaining God-Realization and gives us the unbounded wealth of His Name. He radiates the currents of his mind, heart and soul into the audience attending or listening to his discourses.

Just as the perfume of flowers imparts its sweet fragrance to anything in close proximity to them – whether it is water, cloth or a room, in the same manner, the company of the virtuous and the noble exalts us. If, however, we keep the company of bad people who are engulfed by the filth of this world, then naturally we cannot escape getting smeared with it. By keeping the company of Saints and noble people continuously, we are influenced by the qualities of spirituality and Truth.

A person who is a seeker after Spirituality, should try to imbibe the peace and tranquility which comes from the company of Saints. But in order to reap the full benefits, we should keep their company with a clean mind and a pure heart, so that we may be able to catch the spiritual currents. If, unfortunately, one is not in a position to come to the Saints in person, one should study the books written by them or read other holy books.

Satsang enables one to develop many good qualities. Whoever goes to Satsang receives the spiritual currents

pervading in its environment, for the currents of love and devotion which flow out in such company are shared by all those present. Satsang ultimately leads one to the Lord. So by attending the Satsang of Saints we ensure our Salvation.

Education is available in schools, medicines in hospitals, heat in ovens, and coolness in water.

Similarly, God can be contacted in places where His devotees live. The Satsang of Saints is a great boon in mitigating the suffering of this world. A person who takes the help of a Saint is enabled to cross the Ocean of Life.

Just as the water of a stream loses its identity when it is poured into the Ganges; just as the iron blade of a butcher becomes gold when it is touched with a philosopher's stone; just as a neem tree acquires perfume when it is grown near a sandalwood tree; just as a piece of stone turns into salt when it stays in a salt mine; so also does one become a Saint if he remains in the company of Saints. One is purified by the spiritual currents emanating from a Satsang, and naturally, good and noble qualities are awakened in him.

Maulana Rumi says:

हेच नकुशद नफ़स रा जुज़ ज़िल्ले-पीर

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूम (दफ़तर 2, पृ० 2422)

*Mind cannot be controlled unless it takes refuge in the Murshid (Master).*

All types of people, including the wicked ones, are beneficially influenced by Satsang. Even wine, when poured into the Ganges, becomes the Ganges. Similarly, all people imbibe the goodness of Saints in their company. By attending the Satsang of Saints, whose consciousness is pure and superior, our own lower propensities begin to disappear. But a real Satsang is a discourse which deals with no other topic except that of the Lord and His Naam.

Satsang is of two kinds:

1. The physical company of Saints and listening to their discourses. This purifies our mind and produces an urge in us for Spirituality.

2. The inner Satsang (the result of the outer), by which the soul contacts Naam and goes into the regions above. This can be obtained only if one is fortunate enough to be initiated into the secrets of Spirituality by a true Master.

Satsang is virtually a spiritual college where we are taught the method of Love for and Devotion to the Lord. It is an extraordinary workshop where the mind is so chiselled that all its ugliness and dirt are removed, and it is made worthy of meeting the Lord. It is truly a pilgrimage where hundreds of our bad karmas are washed away and the mind becomes pure. If one wishes to meet God, one must first seek the company of those who are dear to Him, because devotion to them, and their company, even for small periods, is worth more than anything else. For it is their company that awakens all our latent spiritual powers.

## Conclusion

All the worldly objects (even our bodies) are transitory and have to be left here. During our entire life we are engulfed by these temporary objects of the world. But God is without a beginning and without an end. A human being is a combination of his body and soul, the former being subject to dissolution, and the latter eternal and permanent because it is a particle of the Indestructible Lord.

This body is for the use of the soul, and all our connections with the world are through this body. We must take care to keep the body in good health and in proper condition. But the best feature of the body is that it is the temple of the soul, and any respect or honour that is due to it, is deserved only so long as the soul resides in the body. We should, therefore, spend some time for the development of our soul, when we waste so much time on nurturing the body day and night.

We know much about physical sciences and about many other subjects, but we know little about our own self. When we sit in the company of Saints, we begin to realize that death is real and life is unreal. Our life is ebbing every day, every

hour and every minute. And every second is bringing us nearer to our death.

This world is not our permanent abode, and we have to leave it after our allotted span is over. We should not forget our death by being engrossed in worldly activities and pleasures. At the time of death, when the soul leaves the body, our body, our material wealth and all our possessions are worth no more than a piece of straw.

The only lasting value in life is to merge in the Lord by means of Shabd (Sound Current), because the worth of our body as well as the soul is increased when we have contacted Shabd. It is only the soul which is eternal in the body, and we should therefore make our best efforts to know all we can about it, for then alone can we know ourselves.

Naam is invaluable. We should obtain the secret of Naam from a Satguru (True Master) and achieve our Goal in this very life. For that will help us not only in this world but also in the worlds beyond.

Human life is not easy to get, and the human form provides us with the only opportunity of meeting the Lord. Whatever work we do, we do with our body and with our senses. But this will not help our soul. The only thing worthy of achievement and of lasting value is the company of the Saints, because through them alone can we attain Naam (Shabd or Sound Current), and thence the Lord Himself.      m